



NATIONAL NURSING EDUCATION INITIATIVE (NNEI) SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM CONTRACT

INSTRUCTIONS: Do not make any alterations to this document. Only use ballpoint pen to complete.

SECTION A - The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Employee Incentive Scholarship Program (EISP) was established by Title VIII of Public Law 105-368 (the "Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care Personnel Incentive Act of 1998") and codified at sections 7671-7676 of Title 38, United States Code. Under this authority, the VA may award scholarships under they EISP to support the NNEI.

SECTION B - Obligations of the Under Secretary for Health. Subject to availability of funds appropriated by the Congress of the United States for the Employee Incentive Scholarship Program, the Under Secretary for Health agrees to:

1. Provide the undersigned employee with an NNEI award consisting of the payment of tuition and reasonable educational expenses as authorized by 38 U.S.C. §§7671-7676.
2. Ensure that each employee selected to participate in the NNEI is an eligible Department employee who, as of the date on which the employee submits an application for participation in the NNEI, has been continuously employed by the Department for not less than two years.
3. Appoint the employee to a position providing health services in accordance with Section C9 of this contract. This will be accomplished as soon as possible after the employee completes the NNEI sponsored education or training and meets all the applicable qualification requirements for appointment to the position.

SECTION C - Obligation of the Employee. In consideration of payments under the NNEI, the employee agrees to:

1. Accept the NNEI award provided by the Under Secretary for Health under Section B1 of this contract.
2. Pursue education or training in a field leading to appointment or retention in a Title 38 or Hybrid-Title 38 position listed in 38 U.S.C., Section 7401 in a health care discipline for which recruitment or retention of qualified personnel is difficult. This education or training must be approved by the Under Secretary for Health for participation in the NNEI.
3. Maintain full-time or part-time enrollment until completion of the course of study for which the scholarship award is provided.
4. Maintain an acceptable level of academic standing as determined by the educational institution, while enrolled in the course of study for which the scholarship award is provided.
5. Complete all coursework within a maximum of three years after enrollment for full-time students, and a maximum of six years after enrollment for part-time students.

6. Notify the Program Coordinator in writing, of any of the following changes within 10 working days: change in name, address, telephone number, enrollment status, program of study, or academic standing.

7. Ensure that the NNEI program officials have access to educational or training institution official transcripts and other information and documents required to assess the academic standing, status and progress of the scholarship recipient.

8. Serve a period of obligated service. All full-time and part-time employees who enroll in the program must serve a period of obligated service as full- time employees in the Veterans Health Administration (VHA). A full-time student will incur a service obligation of three years, regardless of the amount of education received under the NNEI. The obligated service for a part-time student is pro-rated. It is based on the proportion of the number of credit hours carried by the student in any school year to the number of credit hours required to be carried by a full-time student in the approved course of academic training. However, in no event will the requirement for obligated service under the NNEI be less than one year or greater than three years.

9. Serve the period of obligated service by providing health services in full-time clinical practice of the profession for which trained or in another health-care position in an assignment and location in VHA as determined by the Under Secretary for Health. The beginning date for the period of obligated service varies depending on the type of education or training received by the NNEI participant. This is further explained in VHA Handbook 1020.2, National Nursing Education Initiative.

The period of obligated service for this contract is

SECTION D - Breach of NNEI Award. If a participant:

1. Fails to accept payment or instructs the educational institution to which scholarship payments are to be made not to accept payments under this contract, the participant (other than a participant under paragraph 2 of this section) shall, in addition to the service or other obligations incurred under this contract, pay to the United States the sum of \$1,500 as liquidated damages. Payment of this amount must be made within one year of the date on which the participant fails to accept payment of the NNEI Scholarship award or instructs the school not to accept payment.

2. Fails to maintain an acceptable level of academic standing in the course of study for which the award is provided; is dismissed from the educational institution for disciplinary reasons; voluntarily terminates the course of study or program

NATIONAL NURSING EDUCATION INCENTIVE (NNEI) CONTRACT, CONTINUED

for which the award was granted; fails to become licensed as a Register Nurse in a State, Territory, Commonwealth of the United States (i.e., Puerto Rico) or in the District of Columbia, or fails to meet any applicable licensure requirement in the case of any other health-care personnel who provide either direct patient-care services. or services incident to direct patient-care services, during a period of time determined under regulations prescribed by the Secretary; or, fails to maintain employment, while enrolled as a part-time student in the course of training being pursued under the NNEI as a Department employee; the participant shall, instead of performing the service obligation incurred under this contract, repay to the United States all funds paid to the participant under this contract. Payment of this amount must be made within one year from the date academic training terminates.

3. Breaches the agreement by failing for any reason to complete such participant's period of obligated service, the United States shall be entitled to recover from the participant an amount determined in accordance with the following formula.

A = 3F (t-s / (t)) in which:

"A" is the amount the United States is entitled to recover.

"F " is the sum of:

(a.) The amounts paid under this subchapter, to or on behalf of the participant; and

(b.) The interest on such amounts which would be payable if at the time the amounts were paid they were loans bearing interest at the maximum legal prevailing rate, as determined by the Treasurer of the United States.

"t" is the total number of months in the participant's period of obligated service, including any additional period of obligated service in accordance with Section 7673(c)(2), Title 38, United States Code.

"s" is the number of months of such period served by the participant in accordance with Section 7673, Title 38, United States Code.

The amount the United States is entitled to recover shall be paid within one year of the date the Under Secretary for Health determines that the participant has failed to begin or complete the period of obligated service. The amount the United States is entitled to recover may be offset against any salary, wages, accrued leave or retirement annuity which the participant is owed at the time the participant was terminated or failed to complete their obligated service.

SECTION E - Cancellation, Suspension, and Waiver of Obligation.

1. Any service or payment obligation incurred by a participant under this contract will be cancelled at the time of their death.

2. The Under Secretary for Health may waive or suspend the participant's service or payment obligation incurred under this contract if:

a. Compliance by the participant with the terms and conditions of this contract is impossible due to circumstances beyond the control of the participant, or

b. In cases not related to paragraph 2.a., when considered in the best interest of the Department of Veterans Affairs. Such decisions will be made by the Under Secretary for Health on an individual basis.

SECTION F - Consent for Release of Information. The undersigned employee consents to allow the educational institution in which he or she is enrolled to release to the Program Coordinator information regarding enrollment status and academic standing including grade point average at the time of application and, if selected, during the period of award participation. The applicant understands that this authorization is voluntary and the applicant may revoke the consent at any time. However, the applicant further understands that if this authorization is voluntarily revoked after the award of the scholarship, the scholarship award will be terminated and the applicant will be liable for damages in accordance with provisions of Section 7675, Title 38, United States Code.

SECTION G - General Provisions. The Under Secretary for Health or authorized representative must accept this contract before it becomes effective. The regulations issued by the Under Secretary for Health to implement the NNEI are incorporated into and made a part of this contract. **I agree to comply with these regulations.**

APPLICANT'S NAME

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE

DATE

(PLEASE SIGN, DATE AND RETURN)

SIGNATURE OF UNDER SECRETARY FOR HEALTH, VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION, OR AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE

DATE

***The Program Coordinator will
return a completed copy to you.***